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**CAPTAIN DON DOMINGO RAMON'S DIARY OF**  
**HIS EXPEDITION INTO TEXAS IN 1716**

By

REV. PAUL J. FOIK, C. S. C., PH. D.  
*Chairman of the Commission and President of the Society*

ST. EDWARD'S UNIVERSITY  
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMISSION  
AUSTIN, TEXAS

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## FOREWORD

As the expedition undertaken by Captain Don Domingo Ramón is the beginning of the activities for the permanent settlement of the Province of Texas and of the foundation and establishment of several Missions in this region, it has a special importance as a document, along with the Diary of Reverend Father Fray Isidro Felis de Espinosa (cf. Preliminary Studies of the Texas Catholic Historical Society, Vol. I, Number 4, April, 1930), of which it is the counterpart. A comparison of the two records verifies the accounts given by these chroniclers of the expedition in almost every detail, and one supplements the other with additional information.

The original documents from which the certified transcripts have been made are located in the *Archivo General y Publico de Mexico, Provincias Internas, Volume 181*, and also in *Coleccion de Memorias de Nueva España*, which forms the nucleus of the division *Historia* in the same national archives. The exact title of the series of source materials relating to Texas, Volumes 27 and 28, is as follows: *Documentos para la Historia Ecclesiastica y Civil de la Provincia de Texas*. Another ancient collection, rich in Texas sources, is the valuable *Archivo del Convento Grande de San Francisco*, recently made available at the Biblioteca Nacional in Mexico City. These relevant documents, most of them originals, contain various expeditions into Texas, written, signed and properly authenticated by those persons who made the reports. Reproductions by photostat have been provided by the Commission's research scholar, Dr. Carlos E. Castañeda. A comparative study has been made with the transcripts and variations have been noted.

The translator wishes to acknowledge with thanks the valuable assistance given him in this rendition by Mr. T. L. Evans of the Domestic and Foreign Trade Expansion Department of the Houston Chamber of Commerce.

PAUL J. FOIK, C. S. C., PH. D.,

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CAPTAIN DON DOMINGO RAMON'S DIARY OF HIS  
EXPEDITION INTO TEXAS IN 1716

TRANSLATED BY REV. PAUL J. FOIK, C. S. C., PH. D.

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In the name of the Most Holy Trinity in the Town of Saltillo, Government of Nueva Viscaya, on the Seventeenth day of February of the year 1716, I began the diary and route of the expedition to the Province of Texas, and according to the injunction of His Excellency, the Duke of Linares, Viceroy and Captain General of this New Spain, I, Captain Domingo Ramón, started to execute the order with the company of twenty-five cavalrymen, to enter said province for the protection and custody of the Missions, soon to be established. I was appointed by His Excellency, as Commander-in-Chief of this company, etc.

FEBRUARY

17. On this day I left the Town of Saltillo with all my company and mule train and marched one league toward the north, where I found some bundles of cornstalks, and we pastured the horses and mules. The name of the place was Santa Ynes.

18. I marched with all of the train four leagues toward the north until I reached a creek by the name of Padillas, where I stopped.

19. I remained here, because I lost some pack mules and one of the keepers, who ran away when he was most needed.

20. On this day I travelled eight leagues in an easterly direction until I reached the Rinconada Inn, where I rested, for there was a very high mountain ahead.

21. On this day I marched five leagues in a northerly direction, where I reached the Nacatas Bridge, and here I placed my camp. Then I issued orders to the Chief Ensign of Yeomole, Pedro de los Santos, to leave with his horses and to join me at the Inn, as it was a desirable place to gather them, and thus to afford time for the Religious of the Cross to reach us, for they were to assemble here, so that all might start the journey together. The Inn was a convenient location for this purpose.

22. On this day I left my camp and at four o'clock in the afternoon reached the Town of Saltillo, where I had sent the Sergeant of this company with six soldiers to escort the Religious to said camp, but as they were detained ten days in the said Town on charity, they departed on the first of March, plodded all the distance to this camp for three days, and finally reached Nacatas on the third of March.

#### MARCH

9. I remained at this place until the ninth, because time was necessary to gather some horses and to make preparations for the trip. On this date at night, Anna Guerra, a young mestizo girl, came to me and I asked her what she wanted. She replied that she came to see whether I desired to send or to take her to Texas, because her master had abused her, and moved by charity I placed her with my family.

10. On this day Lorenzo Mercado, a soldier of this company, came to my presence and asked me for Anna Guerra in marriage, which design put her in my company. This day I advanced about ten leagues from this place. I ordered the Chief Ensign of this company with three men to take the horses to the post of the Culebra and to meet me at the Piedras Corral, because the road on which I was travelling was very barren. With the rest of my company and the balance of the pack train I passed in sight of the town of Pesqueria. I marched four leagues north in the middle of a canyon, crossed a river, and stopped on the plantation of Captain Francisco Quintanilla because there were some bundles of cornstalks here.

11. This day I left this place and marched four leagues to the north on the banks of the river until I reached San Martin.

12. This day I set out from this location and nearby I lost a pack mule. I marched on for five leagues to the north until I reached the farm of Captain José Villareal. Later in the same day the lost mule was recovered.

13. This day I could not leave this place, on account of the fog and bad weather.

14. This day I travelled along a river four leagues to the north, crossing in front of the house of Captain José Villareal, the Major of this jurisdiction, on whose plantation there is a Chapel of St. James, where the Religious heard the confessions of the

people of the estate. I reached the place of Piedras Corral, where I awaited the horses, because I had given this order to the Ensign.

15. I was notified this day that Alexander Morales and Jacinto de los Santos had deserted the Cavalry, taking with them two of my horses.

16. On this day I remained in this place because the horses had not yet arrived. I was informed that two other soldiers had deserted by the names of José Cadena and José García.

17. This day the Religious caught more than three hundred fish in the river which is close to this place. I sent Sergeant Augustine Felix and Marcial Saucedo on the trail of the four soldiers with a warrant for their arrest.

18. This day I stayed at this place and decided to go out and look for the horses personally, which I did, finding them six leagues from here. I issued orders that the animals be placed in the Piedras Corral at this post on the following day, and then I returned to my camp.

20. This day the horses could not arrive.

21. This day they came in the afternoon. I was advised that enemies were in the vicinity, and I went to locate them. I found two Indian trails and ordered the guards to be doubled at the end and around the horses.

22. I left this place and marched fourteen leagues on the trail to the north over a country entirely lacking in pasturage and water, until I reached the Potrero Inn adjoining the field.

23. I remained here to strengthen the horses, as they arrived in very bad shape the previous day.

24. This day I was detained at this place in order to gather some horses and oxen, which our Father Fray Antonio Margil had for me.

25. On this day I marched along the foot of a mountain crossing the realm and the Lion's Mouth River, until I reached the ranch named Juan Mendes, having travelled this day six leagues to the north.

26-29. These four days I remained in this place, because a soldier's wife gave birth to a child. At the same time I gathered some cargoes of flour and supplies that I had in the realm, and for Reverend Father Margil I collected a portion of the goats to take to Texas. The last day, the twenty-ninth, I sent the Ensign in

advance with the horses, because they were in bad shape. Hence they had to stop at Carrizal.

30. I marched on a rocky road, and along the way the pasturage was very scarce. Water was found nine leagues to the north at Carrizal.

31. This day I travelled on the trail four leagues to the north over a country lacking pasturage but not water. Along this road a small boy was lost in the woods and could not be found.

#### APRIL

1. In this location I stopped the following day, the first of April, to await a drove of mules that were about to arrive, loaded with corn from Caldera, which was a short distance away. In the evening of this day I received a paper from a Religious, who was the missionary of this place, with information that the Indian enemy had taken from him all of the horses of his mission, and that there were only three men in pursuit of them. Upon the receipt of this message I mounted my steed, and accompanied by two soldiers I left the encampment in good custody and went in search of my horses. The soldiers were very cautious, for they had located the animals the night before. Here I remounted, and because I did not know of the defeat of the said Indians, I went to the Mission, where they told me that they had taken the horses away from the Indians, who were under the impression that there were many soldiers.

2. This day I crossed the Caldera River and went over a plain with plenty of pasturage for a distance of five leagues, where I reached the Real del Chocolate. Fathers Fray Francisco Hidalgo, Fray Benito Sanches, Fray Gabriel Vergara and Fray Manuel Castellanos went to the Mission de la Punta to pass the Holy Week there. Two Religious remained in the camp to hear confessions of all the people and to offer Mass.

3-4. I stayed at this place two days waiting for some oxen and goats from Father Margil. On one of these days there was a high wind and nothing could be done. At night two soldiers by the names of José del Toro and José de la Fuente deserted, and I sent two companions, José Flores and Jacinto Charles, in pursuit of them to take from them the two horses.

5. This day I left here and marched to the north over a good



country for pasturage until I reached the Conchas River, which had been so named because there were many shells in it. I remained at this place five days, so that all of the people would have plenty of time to confess and to pass Holy Week. Here also we captured some wild horses, while in search of some mules that were lost.

11. This day I travelled three leagues to the north over good land, until I crossed the Sabinas River at the Reyneros Pass, where I remained one day to wait for the Religious, who were at the Mission de la Punta with the soldiers who were escorting them.

13. This day I left this place and marched ten leagues to the north over very level and very extensive land, which was without hills or mountains, because they were lost from sight until I arrived at Fish Lake. There was no water before reaching that point. I stayed here two days to strengthen the horses, for they were in very poor condition, and here the pasturage was good. We caught this last day two beautiful wild colts, and farther on there were horses, oxen, and goats, since the water was at a great distance.

16. This day I travelled fifteen leagues over a very extensive country with little pasturage and less water. Crossing the Juanes Creek, I reached the Amole Creek. Here I remained the following day, because the horses, oxen and goats had not yet arrived.

18. This day I left here and marched seven leagues to the north over a good country for pasturage, crossing a creek with running water at a distance of two leagues from Presidio del Rio Grande. The Captain of the said Presidio, the Major Sergeant Diego Ramón, my father, accompanied by other officials and soldiers, came out to receive us in two lines, and we returned the courtesy by saluting with our bows and arrows. The Reverend Father Isidro Felis de Espinosa, President of the Missions, along with three Religious of the same Order went to the same place. Passing close by the said Presidio of the whole realm, I went to set up my camp in some cornfields adjoining a Mission.

19. This day I remained in this place to secure from this Presidio some provisions and other things for the trip, and this night I received advice from our Father Fray Antonio Margil de Jesús that on account of illness he was detained at the Juanes Creek, nine leagues distant from the Presidio. Although it was after eight o'clock, the Reverend Father President of the Missions

left for said place accompanied by two Religious and two soldiers who brought this sick Father to the Presidio mentioned.

20. This day I marched two leagues through a marsh and a thicket of mesquites towards the East Trail on the banks of the Rio Grande del Norte, which runs from west to east. We crossed at the pass called Francia, as it was the best, and we luckily found the river with very little water, which circumstance we attributed to a miracle. This day we transferred all of our things by means of a rope. More than one thousand head of goats swam over with the loss of only twelve because of the current in said river and because I personally directed the crossing to encourage the soldiers and Indians. Although I arrived late, I set up my camp on the other side of the river with extreme happiness.

21. The Sergeant of this company asked permission to go to the Presidio to be the best man for a soldier by the name of José Galindo, who had joined our party with the parents of the bride-to-be. I granted the same, so that it would redound to the benefit of the growth in population. For this occasion this day and the twenty-second were spent. I therefore remained in this place four days, which time was taken up in gathering the necessary supplies from the Missionary Fathers. This day all of the Religious arrived. They collected all things requisite and we started on our journey. On leaving my encampment I made the following list of all the people accompanying me. First, the Fathers Fray Isidro Felis de Espinosa, President; Fray Francisco Hidalgo; Fray Matias Sanches de San Antonio; Fray Benito Sanches; Fray Manuel Castellanos; Fray Pedro de Mendoza; Fray Gabriel Vergara; Fray Gabriel Cubillos, Religious, and Fray Domingo, Religious Donado. The reason that our Very Reverend Father Fray Antonio Margil de Jesús did not accompany us was on account of his illness, and it was with the great sorrow of our entire party that it was necessary for him to remain at the Presidio. I, Captain Domingo Ramón; Chief Ensign, Diego Ramón; Francisco de Revillar; José Guerra; Domingo Jiménez; Juan de Sertucha; Nicolas de los Santos Coy; Juan Baldes; Diego Valdes Jiménez; José Galinda; Antonio Flores; Bernardo Pruto; Domingo Flores; Agustín Telles; Marcial Saucedo; José Guerra, the servant; Manuel Maldonado; Francisco Betanbour; Domingo Gonzales; all of these being soldiers in my company. In addition to this, the following persons accompanied me: Chief Ensign José Maldonado with his family; Sergeant

Lorenzo García; Pedro Botello with his family; Jacinto Charles; José del Toro; José de la Fuente; Alejandro Morales; Lucas de Castro; Married women: María Antonia Longoria; Antonia de la Cerda; Antonia Vidales; Ana María Jiménez; Juana de San Miguel; Josefa Sanches; Ana Guerra to be married; a boy six years old; a girl four years old; Captain Don Louis de St. Denis, Chief Convoy; Don Jean de Medar; and Don Pierre Largen; these three of French nationality; José García; José de Montemayor Arrieres; Antonio Gonzales; Sebastian Guerra; Valentin Mendoza; Blas Jiménez; José Saez; Juan Rodríguez; Juan Perez; Diego Miguel Perez; Cayetano Perez; Francisco de la Cruz; a negro by the name of Juan de la Concepción; two Indian guides, and three in charge of the goats, making a total of sixty-five people. On the twenty-seventh day I left the said Rio Grande and marched five leagues, three to the northwest and two to the west, until I reached the Diego Ramón Pass, where we encountered a storm that night at eight o'clock. The rain was falling in sheets and the wind was very high, causing us to believe that this terrible tempest was excited by the infernal furies. Nearly all of our supplies, which were piled on the ground, were blown down. The three tents were under a mighty strain. The post of one was broken. In fact, the wind raised the animal on which the sentinel was riding and carried them a distance of three or four yards. The horses, oxen and mules were in a stampede, but it was God's wish that they were all found.

28. This day I left this place, having sent the goats and oxen ahead. I marched five leagues toward the north and east and reached a level country, where for the first time we saw green pasturage, for which we thanked God. We had experienced a difficult time with the horses until we reached Lion's Cave. On arriving here Jean de Mendar of French descent fell from his horse, because the animal caught its foot in a hole.

29. This day I marched along the foot of some hills having very good pasturage. I also crossed some creeks which were very insecure for the pack train. On one of these streams, after some goats had gone through a very poor passage, the remainder were taken over at another point. When we assembled them on the other side, we found that they had used a better way, of which we availed ourselves for the transfer of pack trains and horses. This night we were short twenty head of horse stock, and this happened

because some of the Indians of the Pacuaches Nation had taken them to their ranch; but Lorenzo García followed their trail for a distance of four leagues and took them from the Indians. We did not punish them, as the fright which they suffered was considered sufficient penalty. I gave them some tobacco. I further informed them through an interpreter, that if they should repeat this act, I would hang them. This day I travelled seven leagues to the northeast.

30. This day I marched six leagues to the northeast until I reached the post of Carrizo, a well pastured country containing some mesquite thickets and much cactus.

#### MAY

1. This day I advanced three leagues to the east over a beautiful country and a land covered with a variety of flowers with admirable fragrance, until I reached the place of Ojo de Agua.

2. This day I left this location and marched seven leagues to the east over a well pastured country crossing two creeks, one the Caramanchel and the other the Hondo until we reached the Nueces River, where we found very little water, a very bad place therefore for supplying the thirsty cattle. It became necessary to dig a hole with hoes. This day I counted all of the animals, as they came up to drink and found four hundred and ninety.

3. I remained in this place on this day, which was celebrated by having a cross carried in procession and saluted with bows and arrows.

4. This day I marched three leagues southwest over level country with very many holes and open ground. There were five falls as a result, and one was the writer of this diary, who was at the point of never writing again. This was the consequence of racing with a Frenchman, attempting to reach for a hat from the horse. I arrived at Ranas Lake, which is very fine and contains plenty of fish. Here we caught an alligator gar. This day José del Toro deserted, and I sent the Chief Ensign with an Indian to trail him. They found him in a tree and the Chief Ensign raised his arrow to scare him. The Indian begged the officer for the love of God not to shoot, which action was greatly admired by us.

5. This day I remained in this place, as it was necessary to rest the horses and because a soldier was to be married to Anna

Guerra, an occasion that was celebrated with a feast prepared by his companions.

6. This day I marched five leagues to the southwest at the foot of some hills, extending down to beautiful canyons with oak trees and many strange and unknown flowers of rare fragrance, among them a great deal of wild marjoram. We reached a lake by the name of Encinos, which was very charming, and we renamed it San Juan Bautista.

7. This day we proceeded to the southwest four leagues over a country similar to that of the previous days, and we recrossed the Frío River, which we found very dry, but with much vegetation. We camped one league from said river on a lake that we called San Lorenzo, in which region there was located an excellent variety of timber. Here we caught four turkeys which were very tasty. We met at this place six Indians of the Pataguas tribe, for they had a ranch nearby.

8. This day I travelled over a land with much vegetation, where I found very good roads four leagues to the northeast to a lake situated in a grand canyon, which was named San Alexo. This location was two leagues before reaching Río Hondo. I remained here on the ninth of the month looking for a crossing of said river, and I found a very fine one without going around, although the channel is very deep.

10. The royal standard was advanced four leagues to the northwest, passing over said stream on the banks of which are very large and beautiful pecan trees, however, without nuts, since it was not the time for them to bear. There was a frost. We found entwined in the trees great vines, on which there were some bunches of grapes. We reached a beautiful lake, where the Religious observed that we were in latitude twenty-eight degrees thirty-nine seconds. We gave this place the name of Santa Rita.

11. This day I marched three leagues to the northeast at the foot of some hills with good pasturage. The country was very picturesque and pleasant. We stopped in a canyon with small lakes, because one of the Religious was sick. He gave the place the name of Santa Isabel, Queen of Hungary.

12. This day I travelled in the said direction three leagues, part of which territory was a pecan grove. There were other varieties of timber, loose dirt and some pasturage, until we reached the Medina River, where we caught some fish. Here happened

the most unexpected calamity, which was due to having driven all of the horses into the lake to bathe them, which was our custom, since some of them had sore backs. A great number of them going into the water, lost their foothold. Some of them fell down. Others placed their hoofs on top of these and also fell down. They were so firmly stuck in the mud that we lost eighty-three head, a list of which I made in order to pay the owners for the same from my own pocket. I did this to encourage my people. All of them said that if all of the animals had been drowned, they would continue on such a blessed journey. Perhaps the devil had done this to hinder the conflict that was about to be made against him. To crush him a High Mass was said the following day in thanksgiving for the gift [of perseverance.]

14. On this day I marched to the northeast seven leagues through mesquite brush with plenty of pasturage. Crossing two dry creeks we reached a water spring on level land, which we named San Pedro. There was sufficient water here for a city of one-quarter league, and the scenery along the San Antonio River is very beautiful, for there are pecan trees, grape vines, willows, elms and other timbers. We crossed said stream; the water, which was not very deep, reached to our stirrups. We went up the river looking for a camping place and we found a very fine location. There were beautiful shade trees and good pasturage, as we explored the head of the river. Here we found, in the estimate of twelve ultra-marines, hemp nine feet high and flax two feet high. Fish was caught in abundance for everyone, and nets were used in the river with facility.

15. This day was spent at this place because it was very desirable to rest the horses and to celebrate the feast of San Isidro.

16. This day I marched two leagues to the northeast through some hills with good pasturage and mesquite trees. We crossed the Salado Creek, although it is not salty. We found on its banks plenty of grapes and we stopped at its edge.

17. This day we advanced five leagues to the northeast through some hills and mesquite brush. There was plenty of water and green pasturage, until we reached a creek flowing into a large lake, which we named San Xavier.

18. This day I left and travelled to the north through some hills with good pasturage and a scattered growth of oak and pecan trees. We came to the crossing of the Guadalupe River, which is



in two branches. It is the most beautiful stream that can be imagined, because from the passage to its source it is not a greater distance than a shot with a bow and arrow. It has such an abundance of water that it can hardly be crossed without swimming, being very broad. It would seem very strange without water, because on its banks and at its head were found maiden hair ferns, mulberries with leaves like the fig tree, and grapes in quantity. The rocks in the bottom of the river were transparent without any bitumen, which indicates that the water is healthful; and also it is very cold.

19. This day we went to the north one league to the other river, which until then was known as an arm of the Guadalupe, which was not the case. We learned that it was a different one and we named it San Ybon. In both of these streams we caught plenty of fish.

20. I left this place and marched fifteen leagues in a northeasterly direction through a fine country with plenty of pecan and oak trees, grape vines and good pasturage. We crossed the San Marcos which has a great deal of good water that is very cold. We stopped at a creek, which we named San Rafael, and found on the other side two springs, which we called San Isidro and San Pedro del Nogal. We remained at this place to celebrate the Ascension of our Lord. We caught a turkey.

21. This day I travelled nine leagues to the northeast to a creek with streams of water flowing copiously from the hills which extended beyond the wooded section. There were also springs on the land with plenty of grape vines, pecan trees and other varieties of timber.

22. This day I marched three leagues, northeast over some barren hills, brooks and good pasturage. We reached the Colorado River which we found very swollen. Although we explored it four leagues above, we could not locate a crossing, so we stopped there that night. We experienced a heavy thunderstorm with lightning up the river, which led us to believe that the stream would rise more the following day, which was not the case, because God did not will it so. The river receded more than eighteen inches.

24. The stream was forded but the Religious and women, especially Father Fray Manual Castellanos were very frightened, because the latter's horse had left the shallow water and Marcial Saucedo, a soldier, was stuck with his horse in the mud. To recite

litanies was the custom after crossing the river. The whole day was consumed in transferring supplies.

25. This day the goats were conveyed and they swam through the water with great ease, even though the river was about the width of a shot with a bow and arrow.

26. I remained here this day to explore the road, as I was not familiar with the same beyond this point. This was done by sending the Chief Ensign and two companions as scouts, and for that reason we left on the following day.

27. This day I went three leagues southeast and four leagues to the northeast over good land for pasturage, but rough and broken, and it was with some effort that the horses advanced. Here we killed a bison, which was the first, and we were very much pleased with the fine taste of the meat and the great quantity of it. The animal at first sight is beautiful, but on closer observation it is ugly. It is larger than an ox; the hoofs are very much the same; and the horns, although very black, are much shorter and curved. The whole neck up to the forehead is ill-shaped. The bison has long hair which obstructs its view. For that reason it runs against the wind. The animal is very malodorous, does not hear well, and sees less on account of the mane of hair mentioned above. It has a tail like a hog. It runs very fast and the horse must be very quick to catch it. The bison has more meat than two steers and it is very wholesome and good. We arrived at a creek, which we named San Nicolas.

28. This day we marched six leagues to the northeast through some land with very bad holes, due to the exceedingly dry weather, which is very strange for an open and level country accustomed to frequent showers. We reached the creek by the name of Las Animas. Here we killed four bisons, which supplied all of our people with an abundance of meat.

29. I remained in this place to explore the country, because over a period of time the water places have changed. Some dry up and others are made.

30. This day I marched three leagues to the northeast through some hills and canyons with an abundance of water and some thickets, where we found fresh tracks of Indians. I gave orders to follow them. The Indians were found four leagues from the encampment and two of them were brought to my presence. One was of the Yerbipiamé tribe and the other was of the Mescal.



They told me that they were near their ranch and that they would act as my guides.

31. This day I travelled five leagues to the northeast over good land for pasturage and with plenty of water. I stopped at a creek which was named San Diego de Alcalá. This evening there was a heavy rain, which continued during the night. This rain was very much needed, as the land was very dry. We were able to resume our journey.

#### JUNE

1. This day I left this place and advanced two leagues to the southeast, crossing two creeks without any water, but there were good pasturage and thickets. We reached a river where we caught some fish (however, we preferred bison). We gave this location the name of San Xavier.

2. This day I remained here, because it was such a fine day. High Mass was celebrated with great rejoicing.

3. This day I marched five leagues to the northeast; on the road were found various wild fowls. We crossed a creek which was very difficult for the pack train. We arrived at the encampment of Santo Domingo, where an Indian caught an alligator that had come out of the water, and he killed it. This evening I sent three Indians to look for bison, and without my knowledge and orders, another Indian, Ladino, and Miguel Perez, mule driver, both servants of the Fathers, also left. The three Indians returned, but the last ones named did not, because they were lost, and even though we looked for them, they could not be found.

5-6. These days I remained here, and notwithstanding the fact that I have personally conducted a thorough search with the Indians and my company, the missing ones could not be located. The Fathers offered Masses and public prayers for their return.

7. This day I travelled through a densely wooded region of oaks. The forest was so impenetrable that we could not pass through on horseback without cutting down some trees with axes and knives. We lost two knives. We advanced seven leagues with great difficulty, arriving in the afternoon in an open spot, that God had placed there for us to rest after such a painful journey. There was plenty of water and good pasturage. Here the Religious saw a live bison close at hand, which was the first one that could not be killed.

8. This day I wandered three leagues without any definite direction. On the way we gathered a great quantity of wild grapes and could have procured more. We arrived at a small open space close to a lake, which we named San Juan Bautista. From here I set out with an Indian, who knew the country, to find where the woods ended. It was at a distance of a shot with a bow and arrow. This Indian told me that he was astonished that he did not know where he was. Continuing on my course, I finally found the clearing and gave thanks to God for the discovery, as we had been misled for a period of three days.

9. This day we left this place and marched three leagues to the southeast, partly through woods as in the past, and on the road we found a quantity of wild grapes. We stopped on a plain, where we beheld very beautiful springs containing some fish. On this day a horse loaded with supplies ran away from one of the soldiers. Three soldiers, together with the Ensign, pursued it, discovering that the person who always watched over the escaped animal, had also been lost in the chase.

10. This day I remained here, because it was a good camping place and because we wished to celebrate the Feast of Corpus Christi. We gave the location this name.

11. The holiday was observed as well as possible. All of the people confessed and received Holy Communion with great joy.

12. This day I marched eight leagues to the southeast and one-half league to the north over a fine country, crossing two creeks, one with water and the other without. On the banks of one of these brooks forty Indians of various tribes came out to receive us, among them being four Captains. The leader was of the Yerbipame tribe, who knew me because he had done us some wrong several years before. They were delighted to meet us and served as our guides as far as their ranch. Some travelled on horseback, others on foot. They gave us a house in which we could reside, and this was a bow-and-arrow shot from the said ranch. I remained there some hours, where more than two thousand persons, men, women and children, most of them gentiles and very many apostates came. We were sorry to find among them so many lost souls. They requested me to stay over the thirteenth so that the Indians could have time to exchange with my people their buffalo hides, chamois skins and other things that they had for barter; and I legalized these trades with the said Indians, in

order that they would receive fair treatment and would not have a bad impression of the Spaniards. This office was performed with great pleasure.

14. This day I marched three leagues to the northeast, travelling through some canyons and creeks with water, encircled by woods, until we reached the Trinity River. Because this river was high, we could not cross this day; but more than sixty Indians transferred the goats one by one, and I killed a steer and two goats for them for their service.

15. This way I passed over said river, taking the mules one by one. We all crossed without any difficulty, and then we reached another stream which the Indians told us was a branch of the Trinity, for the Spaniards had given it this name, when they came to this region the first time. This river is very wide and marshy in places. The water reached to the saddletree of the horses, which made it necessary to transport the supplies on rafts, a task that was performed this evening with great satisfaction by the Indians; although they were somewhat frightened by an alligator, which the natives fear very much. I removed the peril by shooting the reptile in the eye, which is its vulnerable spot, and by this act their fright was allayed. In the afternoon the two persons that were lost at Santo Domingo presented themselves, advising me that they had gone into a very thick underbrush and could not find their way out for twelve days. Here they saw wild cattle that were lost by the Spaniards on their first visit to Texas, and they killed a fat cow and some turkeys, which food maintained them. At the end of this day they found our trail, and they followed the same until they reached us at this river.

16. This day I advanced to the northeast through an open country and some sparsely wooded regions, where we perceived vines in abundance with many wild grapes. We stopped at a clearing close to an old ranch. Here I sent six men to kill bison and they returned with six of them. They also brought two calves with which we had a bullfight, for they were sufficiently enraged.

17. This day I remained in this place, because the saddled animal belonging to the Chief Ensign had run away. On account of darkness we could not look for the horse that night, but it returned later without anything missing.

18. This day I marched five leagues to the northeast through a beautiful country with fine pasturage, great pecan groves, grape

vines and other admirable trees, passing by a charming brook. In the middle of the road we met four Texas Indians with two women, who were killing bison. They were delighted to receive us, throwing their arms around us, which act is significant of friendship among the gentiles, and the same was done by the women. Thus it was apparent that they had heretofore been in touch with our people, and they were more pleased when we told them that we were coming to live in their country. They accompanied us to a river, which we named Corpus Christi, because we arrived there on the last day of the Octave.

19. This day I travelled in company with the said Texas Indians, whom I treated in the best manner possible. We went in a northerly direction six leagues through a woodland of oaks and pecans, vineyards with plenty of wild grapes and fields for pasturage, crossing two creeks with water, one of which had it in abundance. We reached a lake which we named the Lampazos, because of the great number of burdocks nearby. We arrived at the encampment of San Cristobal on the edge of a plain in close proximity to a hill.

20. This day we marched five leagues to the northeast over some hills and plains with good pasturage and through some timbered regions and dry creeks. We arrived at a small ranch, where we found seven Texans. They received us with great pleasure and demonstrated their delight by giving us green corn and watermelons. This was the first time that we saw corn in this province.

21. This day I advanced to the northeast five leagues over a level country with some timber, as pecan, oak and pine trees. On the way we caught fourteen turkeys. We stopped at a small creek which we named Santa Clara.

22. This day we travelled ten leagues to the northeast over a good country but without water. There were many grape vines, pecan trees, oaks and other timber. We were very thirsty. We arrived at the bank of a river which was very high, and we were informed by the Indians that this was also the Trinity. It is the case that this branch and the one mentioned heretofore join at a great distance from this crossing. General Alonso de Leon passed over both of them. We traversed two dry creeks.

23. This day after going one and one-half leagues we found a beautiful lake with fish and the banks were very pleasant, because

of the many kinds of trees on them. Close to this spot we reached a river, although the passage was not very good. The water was fine, and when we crossed the said river, we found nearby a valley with such heavy pasturage that the horses could not walk. The edges of this valley had many different trees, such as cedars, willows, elms, oaks and many other varieties. Among these are some pines that could be used for boat making. At a short distance we found a lake, equally as beautiful as the previous one, very close to a river on the level with the land, but not with an abundance of water. With the approval of all of the Religious we named this river, San Fernando, the valley, Linares, and the lake, San Luis.

24. This day we spent in preparing a ford at said river, which was done in a short time on account of the great number of people that we had. After passing through this stream at a distance of about one league, we reached a creek, where it was necessary to build a bridge to provide a passage. In the evening, since it was the Vigil of the feast of San Juan Bautista, we shot some fireworks.

25. This day we continued to celebrate the occasion, and every one enthusiastically took part.

26. This day I remained here to wait for my son, whom I had sent with Don Louis de St. Denis, Chief Convoy. This evening, the escort, my son and a Texan Indian arrived with information that all the Indians of the Texas tribe were gathering to come out and meet us on the road. This day was also employed in transferring the flocks of goats to our present location.

27. This day I marched four leagues to the northeast over an excellent country, passing through some canyons with plenty of water, pine trees and other timbers suitable for the making of light lumber. In the evening Captain Don Louis de St. Denis presented himself to me, accompanied by a group of twenty-five men, the most of them Captains. He was well received among the Indians, because he understands their language. I had extended for them some sacks, where they could be seated. Before they arrived at my encampment they discharged their bows and arrows. There also came forward in single file more Indians on horseback, headed by Don Louis. These Indians carried nine long shotguns, all of French make. I ordered my soldiers to line up in single file to receive them. I went forth, accompanied by all of the Religious, with a banner of Jesus Christ and Our Lady of Guadalupe. This reception was celebrated with fireworks; and the said Indians, seated

on the sacks, all embraced me. They then took out a long pipe, which they had for peace only, and they filled it with tobacco, placing a fire in the center. The Captains began to smoke, and the first puff was blown towards heaven, the second to the east, the third to the west, the fourth to the north, the fifth to the south, and the sixth to the earth. This was a demonstration of true peace. The bowl of the pipe has many white feathers, which also decorate the stem from one end to the other, being more than a yard long. They then gave me the pipe to smoke, making the same demonstrations of peace; and in succession they gave it to all of the people, even to the women. Then the Captains took tobacco out of their pockets, and they piled it in the center, so that I might use the same. I likewise gave them some of my tobacco. I then killed for them a young beef. All of this ceremony was performed with manifestation of joy, because these natives are a smiling, happy and agreeable people, especially with the Spaniards. It was apparent they had been in communication with us many times before this occasion.

28. This day I marched four leagues to the northeast over land with much water. There were many grape vines, cactus and trees of several varieties. We stopped with said Indians at a creek with running water.

29. This day I travelled five leagues to the northeast over hills with oak, pine, and pecan trees. There were vines from which we gathered some grapes as large as eggs. We reached a great open space, where we found two lakes with fish. At the edge of the same, we beheld a river with plenty of water. In the afternoon there came into my presence one hundred and fifty Indians, many of whom were Captains. About one league away Don Louis went out to meet them, and they marched in three columns; the middle one displayed the Captains, who carried shotguns as they approached. I went out to greet them, having ordered my soldiers to form a double column. I marched in the center, accompanied by the Religious, and carried the banner. Don Louis de St. Denis fell on his knees to venerate this token. In succession he embraced me and all of the Religious. He was followed by all of the Captains and the other people, which ceremony lasted more than an hour. There were many shots fired by both sides, as I had given some powder to these Indians. Singing the *Te Deum Laudamus*, we went to the encampment, where they seated them-



selves on sackcloth. Then there came many Indians with green corn, watermelons, cantaloupes and tamales which they piled in the center of our assembly, so that we could all partake of these foods. I ordered that they be given one hundred yards of sackcloth, forty blankets, thirty hats and twelve packages of tobacco, which were placed in a pile for them to divide among themselves. There was a very rare circumstance in connection with the allotment of sackcloth. The persons distributing the goods did not have any for themselves. Two or three of the principal Captains were also victims in this shortage. They were as happy as if they had received all of the goods themselves, although they like very much the things that the Spaniards give, especially anything blue. All of the Indians having convened, I addressed them through an interpreter, getting them to understand the purposes of our coming to their country, which was for the salvation of souls; that they should recognize absolutely their only King, who is God and their natural master, Don Philip the Fifth, who sent them these gifts as a sign of his love, through His Excellency, Señor Duke of Linares, Viceroy of New Spain, under whose orders I have come to this country; that it was, therefore, necessary for their good political government that they should elect a Captain General among themselves, which should be done at their discretion. They talked for some time, and soon afterwards a young man, less than a Captain, was chosen by the Spaniards because they always elect the younger in order that the government may last longer. The Indians said that they wanted this one for their Captain General. To him in the name of His Majesty I delivered my cane and approved said election, giving him one of my best jackets to improve his appearance, which made the Indians very happy and contented.

30. I remained in this place to celebrate the feast of Saint Peter and also to wait for my people to arrive. In the afternoon the Indians of the Nasonis and Nacogdoches came and we had the same peace demonstration as heretofore. There was a great display of pleasure manifesting itself with an Indian dance and the beating of drums.

31. This day I marched four leagues over a beautiful country with many valleys, rich timber lands with pecan and pine trees and grape vines. I stopped at the foot of a hill because there were a spring of good water and fine pasturage. In the afternoon I

went out with the Religious to look for a desirable place to establish the first Mission. I was accompanied by the First Captain of the Indians and some others. We found a favorable location, which was decided upon by the Indians, and the Father President was very much pleased with the choice. We then returned to our camp.

## JULY

1-2. These two days were spent in building a hut for myself, which was done by all of the Indians. They were well suited for this work. They completed the abode in nine working days, due to the abundance of timber in this province.

3. This day was spent at the foundation of the first Mission of San Francisco in the pueblo of Neches, where I named a Chaplain and gave possession to the Religious in the name of His Majesty. The house was finished on the fifth.\*

7. This day I reached Concepción, having travelled nine leagues through a wonderful country, for there was an abundance of water, beautiful pine trees and others. There were also vines with great quantities of wild grapes. I crossed a river, which was very high, continuing on my journey to the northeast till I arrived at the town of Asinay, where there were very many ranches with their stalks of corn, watermelons, cantaloupes, beans, tobacco and a flower which they eat. We do not know the name of it. I gave possession to said Religious, named a Chaplain and did everything else necessary. The Indians here dedicated themselves to the same activity of building a church and a dwelling place.†

8. This day I arrived in the town of Nacogdoches, having travelled nine leagues to the southeast over a fertile country with plenty of pasturage, pines, oaks and many grape vines.

9. This day I remained here to attend to such business as might arise. I named a Chaplain, giving instruction to build a church and a dwelling place.‡

10. This day I left this Mission, which was founded twenty-three leagues from the place where the first one was established by the Spaniards. I passed this day in the Mission of the

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\*Mission San Francisco de los Neches.

†Mission Purísima Concepción.

‡Mission of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe.



Nasonis,\* having travelled ten leagues to the west over land equally as fertile as that which we passed, and inhabited by the said Indians. We were entertained in their towns.

11. On the eleventh day the first steps were taken towards the building of a church and dwelling, and I proceeded to name a Chaplain. All of the people referred to are of the same kind, very agreeable and generous. They are glad to teach their language and especially to those of this Mission. All duties in regard to the founding of the four Missions were now concluded according to the orders of His Excellency. Having finished this work, I returned to my camp very happy. I was very pleased with the manner in which the Fathers and our party were received by the Indians. I was the only one to reach the camp, for the horses of my companions were tired out. I sign it: Domingo Ramón.

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\*Mission San Jose de los Nasonis.





